

# CHILD FATALITY REVIEW REPORT

## PIMA COUNTY

### CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN WHO DIED IN 2005

This report provides information on the deaths of children who were residents of Pima County at the time of their deaths. During 2005, there were a total of 160 fatalities among children birth through 17 years of age in Pima County. Males were disproportionately represented among childhood deaths with 58 percent of the deaths overall. Figure 1 shows the number of boys and girls who died in each age group.

**Figure 1. Age Group and Gender for all Deaths  
Birth through 17 Years, Pima County, 2005**

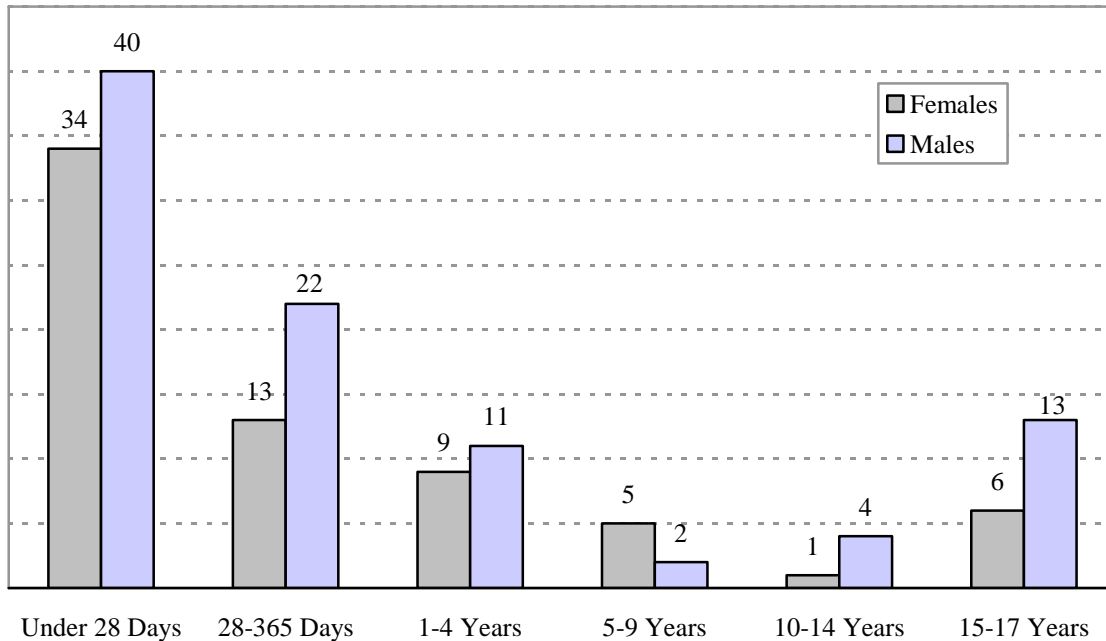
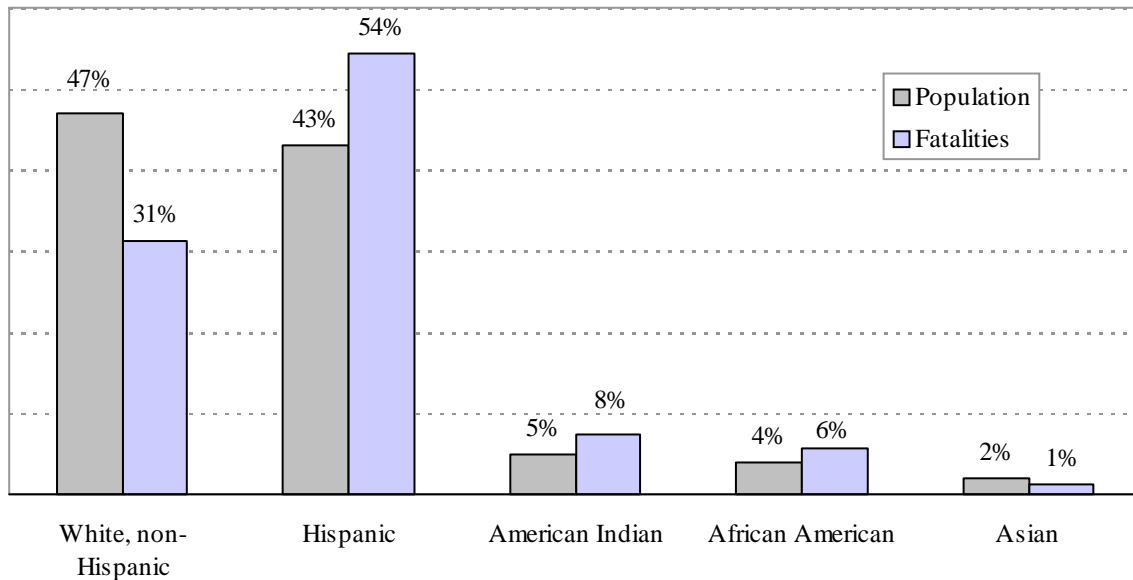


Figure 2 shows the racial and ethnic composition of the children who resided in Pima County compared to fatalities of children who were residents of Pima County. Hispanics were over-represented among childhood fatalities accounting for 54 percent of the childhood fatalities (n=87), yet comprising only 43 percent of the population in Pima County.

**Figure 2. Race/Ethnicity of Population Birth through 17 Years Compared to Fatalities, Pima County, 2005**



## CAUSE AND MANNER OF CHILD FATALITIES

Cause of death refers to the injury or disease resulting in the death (e.g. motor vehicle crash, pneumonia). Manner of death explains how the death came about. Manners of death are categorized as natural, accident, homicide, suicide, or undetermined. In addition to reviewing medical examiner reports, Child Fatality Review Teams review records from hospitals, emergency departments, law enforcement agencies, Child Protective Services, and other sources. As a result of this comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach, the team's determination of cause and manner sometimes differs from those recorded on the death certificate.

Natural deaths (e.g. medical conditions, congenital anomalies, prematurity) accounted for 73 percent (n=116) of all fatalities of children who resided in Pima County. Overall, 14 percent of childhood deaths were due to an accident and 57 percent (n=13) of accidental deaths were due to motor vehicle crashes. Table 1 shows a cross-tabulation of the cause and manner of death for children who were residents of Pima County.

<b>Table 1. Cause And Manner of Death, Birth through 17 Years, Pima County, 2005</b>						
<b><u>Cause</u></b>	<b><u>Accident</u></b>	<b><u>Homicide</u></b>	<b><u>Natural</u></b>	<b><u>Suicide</u></b>	<b><u>Undetermined</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
<b>Medical*</b>			60			60
<b>Prematurity</b>			48			48
<b>MVC</b>	13					13
<b>SIDS</b>			8			8
<b>Unknown</b>	1				6	7
<b>Firearm Injury</b>	1	4		1		6
<b>Blunt Force Trauma</b>		5				5
<b>Drowning</b>	4					4
<b>Hanging</b>				3		3
<b>Suffocation</b>	2					2
<b>Poisoning</b>				2		2
<b>Choking</b>	1					1
<b>Fire/Burn</b>	1					1
<b>Total</b>	23	9	116	6	6	160
<b>Percent of Total</b>	14%	6%	73%	4%	4%	
*Excluding SIDS and prematurity						

## PREVENTABILITY

During reviews, teams examine the circumstances surrounding the death and identify factors that may have contributed to the death. Part of this review includes a 34-item checklist of contributing factors. After reviewing the contributing factors, the team determines whether the death was preventable.

Child Fatality Review Teams consider a child's death preventable if an individual or the community could reasonably have done something that would have changed the circumstances that led to the child's death. Teams determined that 37 (23 percent) of the deaths of children who resided in Pima County were preventable in 2005.

Existence of a contributing factor did not necessarily result in the determination that a death was preventable. Thirty-nine percent of all deaths (n=63) had at least one contributing factor noted. Table 2 shows the top contributing factors for the deaths of children who were residents of Pima County and the number of deaths that had the contributing factor noted.

<b>Table 2. Top Contributing Factors to Child Fatalities, Birth through 17 Years, Pima County, 2005</b>	
<b><u>Factor</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
<b>Drugs/Alcohol</b>	16
<b>Unsafe Bedding</b>	11
<b>Lack of Supervision</b>	8
<b>Lack of Prenatal Care</b>	7

## PIMA COUNTY CHILD FATALITIES COMPARED TO OTHER ARIZONA COUNTIES

This section will compare the deaths of children who resided in Pima County to the deaths of children who resided in the remaining 14 Arizona counties. In 2005, 160 children who were residents of Pima County died, and 913 children died who were residents of the other 14 counties. Child Fatality Review Teams found that Pima County had a smaller percentage of preventable deaths than the remaining counties. Overall, 23 percent of Pima County deaths were preventable (n=37), compared to 34 percent of the deaths of children who resided in the remaining counties (n=314).

Table 3 provides a comparison of the top causes of death for Pima County to the rest of Arizona. Medical causes of death were the leading causes for Pima County as well as for the remainder of Arizona. SIDS was determined to be the fourth leading cause of death in Pima County in 2005, although SIDS is not in the top five leading causes of death in the remaining Arizona counties.

Table 3. Leading Causes of Death, Birth through 17 Years, Pima County Compared to Other Arizona Counties, 2005			
<u>Pima County (n=160)</u>		<u>Arizona, excluding Pima County (n=913)</u>	
<u>Cause</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>	<u>Cause</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
Medical*	38%	Medical*	39%
Prematurity	30%	Prematurity	25%
MVC	8%	MVC	11%
SIDS	5%	Firearm Injury	4%
*Excluding SIDS and prematurity			

Table 4 compares the manner of childhood deaths for residents of Pima County to childhood deaths in the rest of Arizona. The leading manner of death was natural for both Pima County and the remaining counties, accounting for over half of childhood deaths, followed by accidental deaths. A smaller percentage of childhood deaths were due to accidental causes for Pima County (14 percent) than for the remainder of Arizona (21 percent).

Table 4. Manner of Death, Birth through 17 Years, Pima County Compared to Other Arizona Counties, 2005			
<u>Pima County (n=160)</u>		<u>Arizona, excluding Pima County (n=913)</u>	
<u>Manner</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>	<u>Manner</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
Natural	73%	Natural	68%
Accident	14%	Accident	21%
Homicide	6%	Homicide	5%
Suicide	4%	Suicide	3%
Undetermined	4%	Undetermined	3%

Figure 3 compares the age distribution of childhood deaths of Pima County residents to other Arizona counties. Pima County had a higher proportion of deaths for children less than five years old, and a lower proportion of deaths of children five years and older. Infants under 28 days represented 46 percent of childhood fatalities in Pima County, compared to 38 percent of childhood fatalities in the remaining counties.

**Figure 3. Percent of Fatalities by Age Group, Birth through 17 Years, Pima County Compared to Other Arizona Counties, 2005**

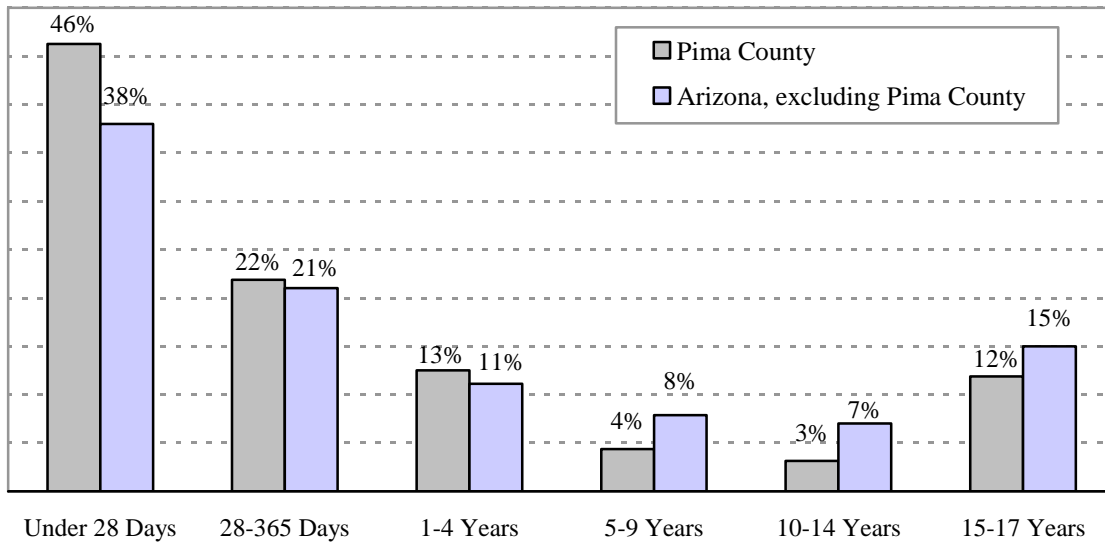


Figure 4 shows a comparison of childhood deaths by gender of Pima County residents with other counties in Arizona. The gender distribution of childhood deaths for Pima County was similar to the rest of Arizona.

**Figure 4. Percent of Fatalities by Gender, Birth through 17 Years, Pima County Compared to Other Arizona Counties, 2005**

